

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 L-01 EB-03 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

OES-02 PM-03 /040 W

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R 170516Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7154

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 3637

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG PFOR CH KS US

SUBJECT: GULF OIL'S ROK CONCESSION

REF: STATE 118632, SEOUL 7868, SEOUL 8426, SEOUL 1267, SEOUL 1456

1. REFTTEL'S REPORT OF GULF WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVES STATEMENTS
RAISES A SERIES OF QUESTIONS.

2. SEOUL 7868 REPORTED THAT GULF OFFICIAL ESTIMATED THE COMPANY'S
LIABILITY FOR FAILING TO DRILL AT NO MORE THAN \$100,000, NOT
\$2.4 MILLION.

3. SEOUL 8426 REPORTED THAT GULF OFFICIAL HAD SAID ZAPATA WOULD
HAVE PAID ALL THE COSTS OF DRILLING IN BLOCK IV AND THAT
GULF WOULD NOT OTHERWISE HAVE DRILLED AS THE PROSPECTS WERE SO
POOR.

4. SEOUL 1267 REPORTED THAT GULF WAS CONSIDERING SELLING OR
RELINQUISHING THE CONCESSION AND SEOUL 1456 REPORTED THAT GULF
HAD TOLD COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER CHANG YIE-JOON THAT THEY
WOULD NOT DRILL, AS THEY FELT BOUND BY USG ADVICE, BUT THAT THEY
WERE WILLING TO CEDE THE CONCESSION TO OTHER NON-US FIRMS. THE
SAME CABLE REPORTED THAT THE AMBASSADOR HAD TOLD MINISTER CHANG
THE USG POSITION ON DRILLING WAS FIRM.

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5. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE TWO REQUESTS MADE BY GULF CANNOT BE

MET. GULF HAS ALREADY SAID IT WILL NOT DRILL AND WE HAVE CONFIRMED
USG OPPOSITION. SINCE GULF HAS ALREADY OFFERED TO CEDE THE CON-
CESSION, WE CAN HARDLY OBJECT IF A NON-US FIRM DECIDES TO DRILL.
HOWEVER, WE HAVE NOTED TO THE ROKG ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT
THE LAST THING THEY MAY WANT IS TO DISCOVER OIL IN DISPUTED
WATERS SINCE IT WOULD ADD A NEW DISPUTE IN THE AREA.
SNEIDER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: OFFSHORE DRILLING, POLICIES, PETROLEUM CONCESSIONS, EXPLORATORY DRILLING, OPERATING COSTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SEOUL03637
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760189-1105
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760546/aaaabmyz.tel
Line Count: 68
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 76 STATE 118632, 76 SEOUL 7868, 76 SEOUL 8426, 76 SEOUL 1267, 76 SEOUL 1456
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <23 SEP 2004 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GULF OIL'S ROK CONCESSION
TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, CH, KS, US, GULF OIL
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006